

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



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Investigating the origin of 70,000 cans

The Environment Protection Authority (SA) is appealing to Broken Hill residents to help them identify any locals who may have sought to illegally gain a financial benefit from South Australia's container deposit scheme.

The scheme, which has been hugely successful in South Australia and soon to be introduced in New South Wales, refunds 10 cents for each approved empty beverage container that is purchased in South Australia.

There is no limit to the number of containers a person can present for a refund although for a quantity of more than 3,000, the depot operator must request a signed declaration stating that the containers were not purchased interstate.

The EPA is investigating a case involving approximately 70,000 empty beer cans that were allegedly transported from New South Wales to South Australia in June, in an unsuccessful attempt to claim a total of \$7,000 from refunds.

EPA Executive Director Operations Andrew Wood said that a classified advertisement may have been placed in a Broken Hill newspaper offering to buy empty cans from locals.

"We are following several lines of inquiry but want to hear from anyone who may have responded to an advertisement to help lead us to those responsible for this unlawful activity," Mr Wood said.

The EPA manages Container Deposit Legislation (CDL) under the provisions of the South Australian *Environment Protection Act 1993* which includes the offence of claiming a refund on any beverage containers purchased outside SA, with a maximum penalty of \$30,000.

Beverage suppliers add an extra cost to their product to cover the refund that can be redeemed at SA collection depots when the empty container is returned for recycling.

The New South Wales Government recently announced a similar scheme to be introduced on 1 July, 2017, with Queensland and Western Australia to follow in 2018.

"South Australia is proud of its very successful container deposit scheme operating since 1977 which achieves an annual return rate of around 80% and equivalent to 583 million empty containers for recycling, which is why it's so important us," Mr Wood said.

Anyone with information about the transfer of containers from New South Wales to South Australia to claim a deposit, should contact the EPA Investigations Branch on 1800 623 445 or (08) 8204 2004.

For further information please contact Chris Metevelis: 0439 137 641